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Leaving the Books Behind -- Preservation Woes

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and Nietzsche or theological writings) and thus, large parts of the academic findings are discussed in the original language.

But if we compare apples with apples (English-language publications with English-language publications) we can say with some certainty that the **Mouton de Gruyter** price structure is well below that of the average **Kluwer** and **Benjamins** prices. In 2003, **Mouton's** average book price was Euro 87,08, which converts to \$104.75, compared to the \$128 average price mentioned in the article. **Mouton's** moderate price structure becomes even more evident when you compare how many pages you get for the price: **Mouton's** average is 400-500 pp (allowing the authors to outline their empirical findings) whereas others are in the neighborhood of 300 pp.

Although we are using statistical facts about price differences between publishers to argue that "**Mouton**" or "**Walter de Gruyter**" are not as expensive as you may think, there are additional issues which lead to higher prices and which should be addressed here.

Both **Walter de Gruyter** and **Mouton de Gruyter** have very high standards regarding the quality of the manuscripts published, be it monographs, edited book series, or journals. To guarantee this quality, we pay for a very highly qualified editorial staff, which cooperates closely with outstanding, highly regarded scholars and editors worldwide. Every manuscript we acquire undergoes a rigorous review process. This also includes dissertations and *Habilitationsschriften*, which often only vaguely resemble their original form after having been subjected to evaluation by series editors and two outside reviewers, and which are then rewritten and reviewed again. It is also worth-

while to mention that **Walter de Gruyter** does not have the non-profit status that some university presses enjoy.

Our understanding of publishing is that we do not simply provide textbooks and readers; rather we publish works that will support the scientific community. Furthermore, our publication policy clearly stipulates that we frequently support areas which are explicitly not mainstream, but which advance scientific knowledge. Among these publications are the manuscripts published in the *Mouton Grammar Library*, the series in which the *Grammar of Gaagudju*, by **Mark Harvey**, 497 pages, was published. Regarding this title, **John Rutledge** states:

While the quality is certainly there in the case of **de Gruyter**, sometimes the scope of contribution may be quite narrow. Here's a case in point: **Harvey, Mark**. *The Grammar of Gaagudju*. (Berlin; New York: **Mouton de Gruyter**, 2002). This monograph is based on the author's 1992 dissertation. Why did it need to cost \$178? **Lincom**, a linguistics specialty house in Munich, is able to produce grammars from around the world for a lot less money. ... But, **Routledge** also charges a lot for their "obscure" grammars as well. Perhaps that is a standard price for the topic and **Lincom** is the exception. ...

The fact that a manuscript is a dissertation is not a criterion per se for a good or bad piece of work. It is clear that the author must have done something to the manuscript as there are about ten years between submission of manuscript and publication. There are piles of correspondence between editors, reviewers and the author, which lie between those ten years.

By comparison, **Lincom Europa** publishes the so-called *Languages of the World* booklet series for studies on grammatical issues. The books in this series are brief sketches of grammatical problems. The *Mouton Grammar Library*, in contrast, builds an extensive collec-

tion of high quality descriptions of languages around the world. Each volume offers a comprehensive grammatical description of a single language together with fully analyzed sample texts, a comprehensive vocabulary, and all relevant information available on the language in question. The only criterion for acceptance is a high standard of scientific quality.

A look at the numbers tells us that page length in the **Lincom** series varies between 35 and 150 pages, at a price of \$30 to \$50. For example, the *Grammar of Nyulnyul*, which is also an Australian language, is 68 pages at a cost of about \$36. Another grammar, for the language of *Bar*, is 60 pages at a cost of about \$35. If we do the math we see that **Lincom** charges about 50 cents per page. This figure, multiplied by the number of pages in the **Mouton Grammar of Gaagudju** (497 pages) suggests that the **Lincom** price would have been \$248.50. Even though we are comparing actual prices and hypothetical prices, our main point is that a manuscript written for and published in the *Languages of the World* series by **Lincom** is simply not the same as a manuscript published in the *Mouton Grammar Library*. A scientist using the **Mouton Grammar** would not be able to switch to the **Lincom** version and find the same level of detail and knowledge.

Walter de Gruyter is a publishing house that is committed to publishing highly scholarly work, which sometimes may not be mainstream, but which is necessary to bring academia forward — who else would do it if some publishers would not take the risk? Not a single conference attended by a **Mouton** representative passes without somebody coming to our booth to thank us for publishing our grammars, particularly grammars of endangered languages which may die out very soon. We hope there will be librarians who can agree with us and apply our criteria to their acquisition plans and educational programs. 🐾

Leaving the Books Behind — Preservation Woes

by **Stephanie A. Kobezak** (University of South Carolina)

Column Editor: **Mary E. (Tinker) Massey** (University of South Carolina, School of Library and Information Science, Columbia, SC) <MMassey@gwm.sc.edu>

Column Editor's Note: *Stephanie is a distance education student at the University of South Carolina. — TM*

Many of us participating in a distance education program in library and information science have had experience working in a library setting. Personally, I had the opportunity to work in the Preservation Department at an academic library. While there, I had a variety of interesting experiences including inadvertently hiring klutzy student assistants to handle book repairs, odd patron requests, bindery glitches, wet books, items that at one point in time might have been a book, and interesting book repair tales. One such memorable event was an eruption of glue at my workstation. Now, there are various types of eruptions but this was unique for it shouldn't

have occurred. It happened so quickly, yet so slowly. The immediate event, the spewing forth of PVA, was rapid. Now just in case you are unfamiliar with PVA, it is officially polyvinyl acetate adhesive, which has a pleasant smooth, creamy consistency. As a main component of the preservation supplies, it resides in a good size container generally kept full. Though, that situation was reevaluated. As the process of cleaning the work area came to a close after completing numerous repairs, the lid to the PVA was tossed aside in a violent (okay, maybe violent is too strong but aggressive isn't, for this stuff just shoved the lid off). Anyway, the PVA spewed forth everywhere. Within milliseconds, there was an immense PVA flow engulfing everything in its path. First the brushes, followed by the scalpel, then the scissors, only to swal-

low the desk entirely. Okay, I exaggerate a bit but only about the scalpel. I remember thinking that I should do something, like panic, but I only watched in slow motion in a haze (perhaps PVA fumes?). As time crept by (flowed might be more appropriate), I contemplated my options - hmm, I could just hide in the stacks until the end of the day or simply return to my desk and appear surprised when a co-worker noticed the floor was sticky. As I contemplated my next course of action, I did notice the floor - it was oozing with PVA. Hmm, maybe no one will notice. The trash can, though directly in line with the flow-



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ing PVA, managed to not catch a drop. It slowly dawned upon me that only on a Monday would the loyal trusted supply of PVA decide to rebel, obviously it resented not having my trusted student assistant present - she must have a few more diplomatic skills. Whatever the true reason, I had my suspicions - it was Monday and only on a Monday would the PVA be granted its one wish - escape, to flow wherever it chose, engulfing what it wanted, disregarding all preservation techniques boldly going where no PVA should go.... I shudder to think what the rolls of buckram will do in a crazed frenzy.

Though this was certainly a messy incident, variety and adventure does exist when addressing preservation issues in a collection. And as future librarians, we need to understand that our stewardship of information materials includes not only diligently assessing the information needs of our patrons and communities but also preserving our cultural heritage. I may be frustrated when a recommendation of mine for the collection is not acknowledged but I certainly become infuriated when books are mistreated. Here is an item that has been purchased with taxpayer dollars that we are allowing to be destroyed. As information professionals we need to not only obtain appropriate materials but ensure their future. I know what you are about to argue - there are hundreds of copies available. Simply buy another one or all print materials soon will be digitized anyway, enabling us to

have copies available for everyone, everywhere, always or perhaps, why do we care about some materials? I don't wish to delve into a discussion as to why we need to preserve our cultural heritage, for I believe that everyone in the library and information science field strongly believes in maintaining and providing access to information. What I do believe needs to be stressed, is the need for basic preservation issues to be addressed in terms of practicality. Through our various courses, we have been exposed to why digitalization will not be the answer for the immediate future. We also have learned that the long awaited mass deacidification project at the **National Library** is not what we had all hoped for in terms of cost and practicality. Yes, I can purchase another copy of **Danielle Steel's** latest book, but why should I if there is a trained individual on staff to make a few repairs enabling the item to quickly return to circulation?

Book repairs may, at first glance, appear to be a daunting task. Building a book from a stack of paper, cords, endsheets and binder boards is indeed a task that requires detailed instruction and years of practice to master the craftsmanship involved in producing a beautifully bound book. If you ever have the opportunity to attend a conference sponsored by the **Guild of Book Workers**, you will be rewarded by dazzling displays of creativity, ingenuity and skill where new artistic book creations may be viewed, along with conserved books by dedicated, talented conservators. The basic preservation of items can be learned in minimal time in comparison to the years of study for conservation. How many

of us have been faced with the dilemma of a page loosened from a textblock? A torn spine? A mangled page? A dangling textblock from its cover? All of these problems and more, cause a book or serial to be removed from circulation and often stashed on a shelf in the back room in the hope that someone will have a solution. These items need not be immediately replaced consuming valuable small budgets. Admittedly, repairs in some instances merely delay the inevitable removal from the collection, but for most situations if damage is noticed early and addressed, the book or serial has the potential to remain in circulation for many years to come.

As a student, I appreciate the constant focus on new technology and encouragement to delve into the exciting new possibilities brought by it. And of course, the basics of librarianship must be addressed. But, what happened to the book? It appears to have become lost in this new era of technology. We must not forsake this tried and true vehicle for the dissemination of knowledge. I urge all students and those already in the field to participate in seminars and courses that provide the basics of book repair. There are several wonderful manuals on book repair and the history of the book that can set one on the path of repairing books with confidence. I am mentioning three that are my personal favorites. The *British Library Guide to Bookbinding: History and Techniques* (ISBN 0802081762) provides a wonderful summary of the history of bookbinding through the ages. The *ABC of Bookbinding* (ISBN 1884718418) contains a glossary of over 700 bookbinding terms with

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Bet You Missed It

Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths

Column Editor: **Pamela M. Rose, M.L.S.** (Web Services & Library Promotion Coordinator, University at Buffalo; Phone: 716-829-2408 x129; Fax: 716-829-2211) <pmrose@acsu.buffalo.edu> wings.buffalo.edu/~pmrose

Column Editor's Note: Hey, are you reading this? Your esteemed column editor would like to know what you think! Zip off a quick email to <pmrose@buffalo.edu>. Does BYMI fill your needs? Do you have any suggestions for changes? I'm listening! — PR

FLORA

by **Pamela M. Rose** (University at Buffalo)

The fifth largest country in the world by area, Brazil contains some 20 percent of all plant species, concentrated in some areas to 3000 species per square mile. Preserving the genetic code of endangered plants is the first priority of 5 full-time researchers at the DNA Bank, a laboratory and greenhouse in Rio de Janeiro's lush Botanical Gardens. The facility, inaugurated by Environment Minister **Marina Silva**, hopes to collect, freeze and preserve 1000 DNA samples a year, eventually providing a repository for all plants in the country.

See — "Brazil Inaugurates DNA Bank for Endangered Flora" at http://www.enn.com/news/2004-06-10/s_24739.asp.

...AND FAUNA

by **Pamela M. Rose** (University at Buffalo)

In Britain, a "Frozen Ark" has been established as "the world's first DNA and tissue bank dedicated to all the world's endangered animals." A project of London's Natural History Museum, the Zoological Society of London, and the Institute of Genetics at the **U. of Nottingham**, the ark will be both a real and a virtual resource aiming to fill in the gaps. There are currently no plans to clone the specimens which will be kept in zoo and museum freezers.

See — "Bank for Endangered DNA" in *Science*, July 30, 2004, p.603.

Seamless Consumer Culture

by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

The industry agreed upon standards dividing ads from editorial content are going by the boards. Now *Country Living* delivers up an ad from **Home Depot's EXPO Design Center** juxtaposed against a feature story on jazzing up that dreary kitchen. *Country Living* claims it was coincidental, but the authors are dubious.

And that's not all. Products are being mentioned in articles. And ads are using layouts that resemble the magazine content.

See — **Brian Steinberg** and **James Bandler**, "Blurring the Line" in *The Wall Street Journal*, Aug. 9, 2004, p. B1.

PERPETUAL HOSTAGE

by **Sandra Beehler** (Lewis & Clark College)

Authors are up in arms about the "interminable rights clause" found in contracts with some literary agencies. The clause establishes an agency as the permanent "agent of record" for any works contracted through the agency, even when publishing contracts have expired, the author's agent leaves the company or a work has gone out of print. Agreeing to the clause could hold the author in perpetual hostage to an agency and cause complications for heirs after an author's death. Currently only a few literary agencies include this clause, but authors and the organizations that represent them fear it could become an industry standard.

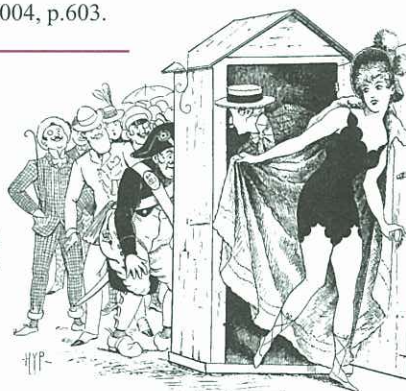
See — "Lit Clause Gives Authors Pause," *Publishers Weekly*, July 19, 2004, p. 5,8.

DROPPED DOLLARS

by **Sandra Beehler** (Lewis & Clark College)

Once again, the dollar's value is dropping on the international market, a trend that may continue. This is largely attributable to America's current-account deficit — a combination of high U.S. trade deficits, and dependence on income from foreign investments in the U.S. Currently, America's current-account deficit amounts to 3.2% of the GDP, and some economists believe it could rise as high as 7% of GDP. Foreign investment in the U.S. dropped in the past 12 months and Asian banks slowed their purchase of dollars — both actions are bad news for the American economy and the dollar.

See — "The Dollar: Keep an Eye on It," *The Economist*, July 10, 2004, p. 63-64.



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illustrations. And then for actual detailed instruction with magnificent carefully drawn illustrations, there is *Book Repair*, 2nd ed., by **Keneth Lavender** (ISBN 1555704085). Here you will be able to learn how to properly tip in a page, replace endsheets, recase a textblock and many more essential repairs to save books from the dark recesses of the back room.

I strongly recommend for all students to consider how they will learn to deal with damage done to books. I had anticipated that there would be a course on introductory book repair

that would enable us, as future librarians, to confidently address issues that arise in every size and type of library. From school library media specialists to law librarians, we will be faced with the question of how to handle the routine situation of wear and tear to the unfortunate situation of wet books. As stewards, entrusted with maintaining in a useable format the knowledge obtained from human endeavor through the ages, we must be prepared to save these resources for the community that we serve. Every citizen has the right to access literary resources. Misuse combined with lack of care and knowledge should not hinder those who have entrusted us with maintaining literary treasures from utilizing these resources. Otherwise, we

are participating in a form of censorship — electing to permit items to be inaccessible, simply because we choose not to return them to a useful state. We have an obligation to provide access to all materials. That does not mean it resides in the library's catalog and is unavailable. There must be true access and availability to all of the library's materials. Next time you pick up a book, think about the possibility for damage and the steps that you would take to repair it for continued access and availability for your community of patrons. And above all else, enjoy the pleasure of repairing a book or serial, holding in your hand the accomplishment of a once again usable piece of our literary heritage. 